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Doctor Francis Moylan,

To his Beloved Flock, and in particular to the lower Order of the Roman Catholic Inhabitants of the Diocese of Cork.

IN times like the present, when government has declared its determination to suppress by the most vigorous and summary means, the spirit of insurrection and outrage, which has manifested itself in some parts of this county, I should consider myself deficient in what I owe to you, Dearly Beloved Brethren, if I omitted to warn you of the impending danger, and of the necessity of adopting such a line of conduct, as may prevent the exercise of the severities of the law against you. Charged as I am, by Almighty God, with the care of your souls, interested as I most warmly feel in whatever regards you, it is my bounden duty to remove as far as in my power, any delusion under which you may at any time labor, and to apprise you of whatever might tend either to obstruct, or to promote your temporal and eternal welfare. In the present critical state of our country, in the present unhappy temper of some men's minds, and under the threats of personal violence, with which I have been menaced, the timid precautions arising from personal consideration, might suggest and recommend a silent observation of passing occurrences; but as you, Dearly Beloved Brethren, are the first object of my Pastoral solicitude and care, and dearer to me *than life*, nothing could dissuade me from addressing to you my admonitions,

nitions, but the apprehension of their not proving, in the actual-state of the public mind, as extensively useful as I should expect, and that their design might be misrepresented by those enemies of all good order and religion, who have of late so industriously sought to insinuate themselves into your confidence. Trusting however in the Lord, that you will receive this address in the same spirit in which I write it, (and God knows it is your good only I have in view) I beseech you, Beloved Brethren, and exhort you as your spiritual Father, and your sincerest Friend, to weigh well and consider your present situation. It is not to political discussion, but to religious reflection, I mean to call your attention, and therefore shall forbear to enquire into the original cause or causes of the present unhappy state of our country: the decision of this question would answer no purpose for you, were it as obvious as it appears complicated. But surely the first principles of our holy Religion, as you have learned it in Christ Jesus, inculcate and enjoin obedience to the laws, and respect for the constituted authorities—that secret associations for the subversion of the order and peace of society, are unlawful and criminal, and that the guilt of such combinations is highly aggravated by attempting to confirm their engagements by the sanction of an oath—For an oath, my Brethren, is a religious act—it is a solemn appeal to God, as the witness of the truth of what we declare, and the avenger of what is false or evil; when we take a just and lawful oath, proposed by such as are invested with competent authority, we honor God—we testify our reverence and veneration for his Divine Majesty, as the Infallible Truth, that cannot be deceived, and as the just punisher of unrighteousness and falsehood. But an oath that is either false, or taken to bind to the perpetration of any thing wicked, is the grossest and most direct affront to God—it is a sacrilegious profanation of his Adorable Name.—High Treason against his Tremendous Majesty—a formal contempt of his power—in a word, braving the Almighty to his very face.

SUCH, My Dear Brethren, are all oaths of combination to the prejudice of *any* neighbour or fellow-creature, or against the tranquillity and good order of the community in which we live. Nothing therefore can sanction or justify them. They are an abomination in the eyes of the Lord, and will infallibly, unless repented of, draw down the vengeance of Heaven, sooner or later, on the wretches that are guilty of such impious practices. Nothing can more effectually tend to bring down the judgments

judgments of God upon the country; for it is a fact, that where the practice of taking false or wicked oaths gains ground, all manner of crimes grow common with it, and in proportion to the progress it makes amongst any people, the nearer they approach, until at length they are plunged into the gulph of destruction. That such are the necessary consequences of false or wicked oaths, the Almighty has expressly declared, by the mouths of the Prophets, *Jeremias and Osee*. **BECAUSE OF SWEARING THE LAND MOURNETH**, says *Jeremias*, and *Osee* sets that down as the principal cause of the Lord's indignation against his chosen people, the children of Israel. **SWEARING, AND LYING, AND KILLING, AND THEFT, HAVE OVERFLOWED, AND BLOOD TOUCHETH BLOOD, THEREFORE**, says the Prophet, **SHALL THE LAND MOURN, AND EVERY ONE THAT DWELLETH IN IT SHALL LANGUISH**. How applicable, alas! these awful denunciations of the Almighty, and how literally have they been fulfilled in our distracted land.

SUCH therefore, amongst you, My Brethren, as may have had the great misfortune of being, by the persuasions of artful and designing men, deluded into so heinous a crime, let me entreat you to follow the advice of the Prophet *Ezechiel*, *Be converted and do penance for all your iniquities, and iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, by which you have transgressed, and make to yourselves a new heart and a new spirit, and why will you die O! house of Israel?*—Associate not with those Atheistical Incendiaries, who would extinguish that horror, which every human breast must feel against the execrable crimes of robbery and murder, by which the national character has of late been attempted to be stained. Return to your usual occupations of industry and labor, and instead of bewildering your minds in speculations about government, which you cannot comprehend, endeavour to realize for yourselves and your families the comforts which a patient and unwearied application to your respective avocations will not fail to produce. To be totally exempt from sufferings is what you cannot expect at this side of the grave—No state, no condition, no rank, however exalted, but has its pains, its crosses and tribulations, and this by Divine appointment. And why? because this life is a state of trial—we are in this, only on our way to a better world. If we conduct
ourselves

ourselves well here, for the little time we have to remain, by discharging the duties of our respective states, we shall certainly be unspeakably and eternally happy hereafter. Instead then of indulging in fruitless and unseemly murmurs, or seeking by unlawful methods to soften the hardships of your condition, console yourselves, My Dear Brethren, with the assurance Religion holds out to you, that for whatever you suffer in *this* world, you shall, if it be not your own fault, be amply rewarded in the next—that the transient afflictions of this fugitive life, if patiently endured, are destined to produce an eternal weight of Glory. How powerful a motive this to console us, when smarting under the chastisements of Heaven, or the miseries of the Earth.

BUT whilst I exhort you, My Brethren, patiently to endure whatever portion of evil, in the general distribution of Providence, may fall to your share, I would have you not unmindful of the blessings you enjoy, and the favors you have received. Certain privileges excepted, you possess the advantages of the Constitution. The penal laws, under which our fathers groaned, have been almost all done away. You have the comfort of exercising your holy Religion without controul, and to the benignity of Government, and to the liberality and wisdom of Parliament, we are indebted for the establishment and endowment of a Roman Catholic College, on an extensive plan, which will afford a liberal education to our youth, and a supply of Clergy to our church, when the present generation have finished their career: These are blessings, these are favours, that should excite and call forth our gratitude, and this gratitude we should evince by a steady attachment to the Constitution, and unshaken loyalty to our gracious Sovereign, a Sovereign who has done more for the Roman Catholic body, and indeed for this Kingdom, in general, than any, or all of his predecessors. I know, Beloved Brethren, that efforts have been made by evil minded men, to weaken your attachment to the Constitution of your country, and your allegiance to the best of Kings, by circulating impious and seditious writings, and encouraging you to outrage and riot—But in the name of God, why should you be the dupes and tools of these wicked incendiaries? Surely they could not have your good at heart! In forwarding their seditious schemes, by disturbing the country, you only promoted your own and your families ruin and destruction,

by

by drawing on your heads the vengeance of insulted laws. The sword of justice is not yet sheathed, and yet observe how many of the seduced and misguided people has it already cut off? and over the heads of how many, separated by impenetrable barriers from their friends, does it still remain suspended? Ah! who shall restore to widowed wives and orphan children their husbands and fathers, thus prematurely cut off? Will the miscreants who inveigled them into the paths of infamy and ruin, come forward to indemnify and console the surviving friends, for the dreadful calamities they have brought upon them? Alas! no consolation or indemnity will they afford. Instead then, of suffering yourselves to be any longer misled, take warning by the fate of those victims of public justice, and let the declarations of lively sorrow and contrition for violating the laws, and disturbing the peace of the country, made with their dying breath, make a lasting impression on your minds. Consider the vigorous measures now to be enforced against the disturbers of peace and good order; this county is just proclaimed—military law established. From the known humanity of the Commander in Chief, and of the immediate Commanders of our District, no unnecessary rigor in the discharge of their duty can be apprehended; and you should bless God that such Commanders have been at this crisis appointed; their benevolent and liberal hearts feel and make due allowance for the deviations of uncultivated nature—they know how to distinguish between the deluded peasant, and the artful incendiary that imposes on his ignorance and credulity. But if acts of outrage and insubordination be persevered in, if the abominable crimes of robbery and violence be abetted and perpetrated, if the laws be not obeyed and respected, then though we cannot but sorely lament the necessity, we cannot be surprised at their exerting the formidable powers with which they are invested, for the protection of the innocent, and punishment of contumacious offenders.

LET me then, Dearly Beloved Brethren, exhort such of you as may have been unfortunately deceived by ambitious agitators, to return immediately to your duty—to that observance of the laws of the Community, by which you are yourselves protected.—Renounce all those wicked associations, formed for the subversion of the social order, and peace of the Country. By compliance with the notices published by the Commander in Chief for your information, you will avoid the heavy mischiefs,

chiefs, by which a disregard to them will be inevitably followed. As members of society, demean yourselves according to the relations of this state—love, cherish without exception, your neighbours, and fellow-subjects of every denomination.—Consider them as your Brethren, and treat them with that kindness, which such a sentiment inspires.—*Do unto them, in every respect, as you would wish they should do unto you.*—This is what our Divine Law-Giver commands—and it is only by complying with this command, that you can expect eternal Salvation.

I AM aware that my intention in thus addressing you, Beloved Brethren, at this critical juncture, will be grossly misrepresented by the unprincipled incendiaries who wish to pervert and inflame your minds.—They will assert, as they often did before, that I act under the influence, and as a pensioner of Government—a calumny which I always despised, and should still continue to consider as unworthy of notice, were it not for the impression that I hear this, and similar falsehoods have made on the minds of some of the lower order of my Flock. As I hold myself in the station I fill, *Debtor to the wise, and to the unwise*, “I do now most solemnly declare in the presence of God, who shall judge Us all, that I never received a pension or emolument, directly, or indirectly from Government—that it was never offered, nor promised me—neither looked for, nor do I expect it; and that in the instructions or advices I found it incumbent on me to give to my Flock, as to the line of conduct I thought they should observe in these eventful times, I was actuated solely by a regard to their real interests, and by a desire to comply with the duty I owe, and the steady, heartfelt unalterable attachment I feel, and ever shall feel to my King and my Country; and what I say of myself on this head, I am warranted to assert the same of every Roman Catholic Bishop of the Kingdom.” What then could be the views of the inventors, and propagators of these falsehoods? What end could they propose to themselves? No other, most assuredly, than to impose on your credulity—to estrange your hearts and affections from the Pastors appointed by Almighty God to guide you in the ways of Salvation—to eradicate from your minds the belief of true Religion and morality, and thus to dispose you to adopt those Atheistical principles of French Fraternity, which have deluged Christendom with blood and carnage—spread havoc and devastation
wherever

wherever they were introduced, and which have but a few weeks back pillaged and profaned the Capital of the Christian World, and robbed its peaceful and beneficent Prince, the venerable Head of our Church, of his territory and independence.

THESE are not the guides you should follow—their ways lead not to life, but to death—*They come to you in sheeps clothing, exaggerating, and then pretending to feel for your grievances; but they are inwardly ravening wolves. Beware then of these false Prophets, listen to them no longer, but listen to the Oracle of Divine Wisdom, which commands you to fear God, and honor the King, to respect and obey your Rulers, to avoid evil, and to do good, to work out your Salvation in fear and trembling, and thus having consciences void of all offence, you will insure to yourselves present Peace and future Happiness, which may God, in his infinite Mercy, grant you all my Beloved Brethren in Christ.*

CORK, APRIL 26, 1798.



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AN
ADDRESS

TO THE

People of Great-Britain.

By R. WATSON,

LORD BISHOP OF LANDAFF.

ALSO,

DR. DILLON'S

PASTORAL LETTER.